

Not the Father-Daughter Bonding You Expected by professorRidiculous

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Summary:

Not the father-daughter bonding you expected, nor is it the one you asked for, but it's the one you're getting.

Steve is tasked with teaching El/Jane how to ride a bike.

Not the Father-Daughter Bonding You Expected

“Hello?”

“Harrington, It's Hopper——”

“Chief Hopper?”

“... Mr. Harrington, yeah, sorry to bother you, is your son home?”

“He's sleeping. Did he do something wrong?”

“Can you put him on the phone for me, please?”

After waking his son, Mr. Harrington hands the phone to a groggy Steve with messy hair.

“It's the Chief of Police,” he says sternly, hoping it might cause fear in the boy. Immediately, Steve perks up and answers the phone.

“Hopper?” he asks into the phone. Mr. Harrington can't hear the other end of the conversation, so he looks to his wife and shakes his head disapprovingly, thinking their son's in trouble.

“No, what do you need,” he hears Steve ask. “... Y-yeah definitely! I'll be there in...? Yeah, sure, I'll meet you there.”

Steve hangs up the phone and walks into the kitchen with an unnoticed spring in his step. After talking to Hopper about El——er, Jane——he suddenly gets a craving for Eggo's. As he's toasting a couple, his father decides to interrogate him.

“So what was that all about?”

Steve hesitates. El's year of laying low is technically over, so he could say the truth: he's going out to teach her how to ride a bike. But if he does that, then he has to explain the whole ‘Jane Hopper’ thing, and that's pretty complicated. But... people are going to find out about her eventually, so it shouldn't be a problem right?

No, it's not right. She's Hopper's kid, so Hopper should be the one to

tell people.

“I’m gonna help out the Chief of Police,” is all Steve says. He takes his Eggos and runs upstairs to get ready.

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“So she’s Hopper’s... daughter.”

“Uh-huh...”

Flo, Callahan, and Powell are staring at the curly-haired, teenage girl sitting with Hopper in his office. Hopper is looking through the papers Flo gave him while they eat some apples.

While Callahan and Powell were out getting coffee earlier, Hopper arrived and willingly—willingly!—picked up the apples and gave one to the little girl in the oversized flannel behind him. Flo smiled at her and asked her whether Hopper was helping look for her parents. Hopper cleared his throat, sent the girl to his office, and spoke privately to Flo.

He sighed, “So that’s Jane. Her mom died, and I’m, y’know, technically her father, because of uh...” He let that sentence die out, made that ridiculous face of his, and Flo came to the same conclusion that everyone else would. Everyone in this town knows about his one-night-stand kind of behavior ever since high school, so Jane being that kind of daughter is a very believable cover. The hook-ups finally worked in his favor.

Flo, Callahan, and Powell’s attentions are diverted when they hear a car roll up in front of the station. Hopper and the little girl walk outside. Through the window, the two cops (and Flo) see a conversation happening between Hopper and that rowdy teenager Steve Harrington. Now they’re even more confused.

What did Steve Harrington do this time? When and where did Hopper get this kid? And—I’m sorry—WHAT is that he’s giving

to Steve Harrington?!

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“Harrington,” Hopper says, “took you long enough.”

“Hey, it takes a long time to perfect this,” Steve says, pointing to his hair. Hopper jabs a finger square in his chest, almost knocking him over.

“Alright Harrington, I'm trusting you to take care of my kid,” he says in a low voice. “Make sure she knows everything alright? Make sure she knows the way between the school and the cabin, and maybe the Byers house too——”

“Don't worry,” says Steve. He pushes Hopper's finger off his chest. “I have it all under control.”

Hopper sighs and hands Steve a small, red bike with wide handles.

“Alright kid”——Hopper ruffles El's hair——“be careful on there, wear a helmet, and remember the number one rule?”

“No powers in public,” she says.

And with that, Steve drives El to the park, and Hopper walks inside and ignores Callahan, Powell, and Flo's stares.